

Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act

The Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act updates Oregon's recycling system by building on local community programs and leveraging the resources of producers to create an innovative system that works for everyone. The law requires packaging producers to share responsibility for effective management of their products after use. **The new law goes into effect January 1, 2022 and program changes will start in July 2025.**

KEY BENEFITS



Shares and scales responsibility across the recycling system. Producers will be brought into the recycling system to fund improvements and expand recycling services. Cost to producers will be based on what materials they use and how much they sell into Oregon.



Creates one statewide list of what can be recycled. The uniform collection list will provide clarity to households and businesses about what can be recycled, and create efficiencies in recycling operations across the state.



Increases access to recycling. The new law will provide recycling services to people who didn't previously have it, such as those who live in apartments and rural areas.



Incentivizes sustainable products. Producer fees will be higher for non-recyclable products and those creating more environmental pollution.



Prevents plastic pollution. Ensures collected materials are recycled responsibly and keeps plastic and other trash out of our waterways and communities — both domestically and overseas.



Creates accountability to outcomes. DEQ will permit and audit recycling processors, and a Governor-appointed advisory council will review producer program plans, the statewide collection list and educational resources.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Below are key dates through 2025. Stakeholder engagement, project planning and research extend throughout implementation.

- DEQ implementation planning

- Rulemaking
- Needs assessment for collection expansion due July 1
- Pilot projects for contamination reduction
- Studies for processor fees

By July 1:

- Producers join a PRO
- PROs begin implementation
- Local governments implement program changes, including statewide collection list
- Processors obtain permit or certification

2021

2022

2023

2024

2025

- Law effective Jan. 1
- DEQ staff hiring
- Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council begins meeting
- Truth in Labeling Task Force submits report to Legislature by June

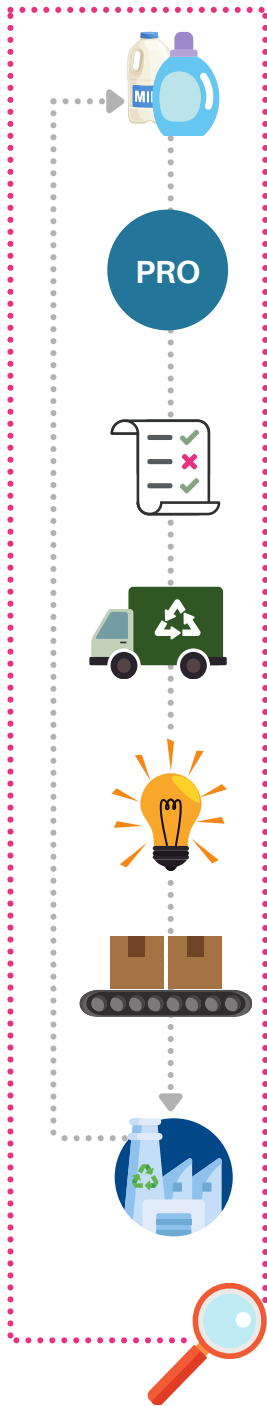
- Rulemaking
- First PRO program plans due
- Public procurement assessment due May 15
- First equity study due Sept. 15
- First needs assessment for multifamily services due Sept. 15

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How the Recycling Modernization Act Works

The Recycling Modernization Act requires producers of packaging, paper products and food serviceware to share responsibility for effective management of their products after use. These producers will finance improvements to the recycling system and perform specific functions to make Oregon's recycling programs convenient, accessible and responsible. Local governments will maintain their role overseeing collection and education in their communities.



PRODUCERS will join and pay a membership fee to a nonprofit Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) that will fund improvements and ensure that collected recyclables go to responsible end markets. Producers will also be required to meet new recycling goals for plastic packaging and food serviceware.

PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY ORGANIZATIONS will collect producer membership fees and use them to ensure improved and expanded recycling services. Most collection will continue to be overseen by local governments, but PROs will provide services for certain hard-to-recycle materials. PROs will also fund waste prevention grants, and several studies to assess challenges and recommend improvements to improve multifamily recycling conditions, equity in the recycling system, and litter and marine debris.

ONE COLLECTION LIST will allow individuals and businesses to recycle the same items across the state, at home and at work. PRO funding will enable collection of the same items regardless of location or distance from recycling markets.

RECYCLING SERVICES will be expanded under the direction of local governments, with support from the PROs, especially for rural communities and people living in apartments. The same private collection companies will continue to provide recycling services.

EDUCATION about how to recycle will continue to be offered by local governments, along with new programs to reduce contamination (trash) in our recyclables. PROs will create accessible educational resources that local governments can use and that meet the needs of diverse communities.

PROCESSING of recyclables will be done in facilities that meet new performance standards, including for material quality, reporting, and paying living wages to workers. These facilities will be required to obtain a permit from DEQ or meet similar standards to receive material from Oregon communities. Local governments will make sure material collected in their communities goes to approved facilities.

END MARKETS that can handle the material appropriately — without creating plastic pollution or other harms — can purchase it after sorting and recycle it into something new. Producers and processors will be obligated to make sure materials collected in Oregon reach responsible end markets.

OVERSIGHT AND INTEGRATION will be provided by DEQ, with accountability from all participants. DEQ will plan and implement changes required by the new law, and oversee the recycling system and provide enforcement where necessary. A new Governor-appointed advisory council will provide feedback to DEQ and PROs about important elements of the new system. PROs, recycling processors and local governments will track and report more information about where our recyclables go and ensure that they are managed responsibly and used to make new products.